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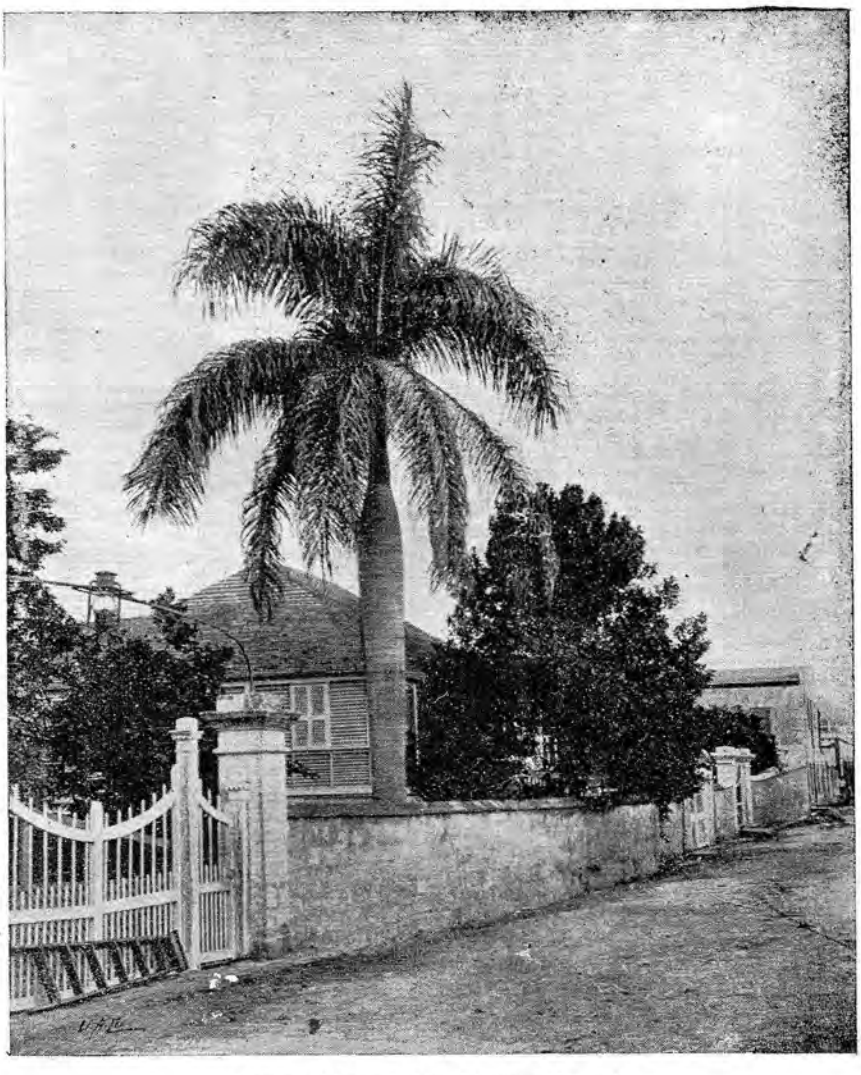

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## Vick Publishing Company, Rochester, N. Y.

# VICKS MAGAZINE

VOL. 20 ROCHESTER, N. Y., MARCH, 1897 NO. 5

## POLYANTHA ROSES IN BEDS.

SINCE the introduction of the hybrid polyantha roses their cultivation has become widely extended, so that there are few flower growers now who are unacquainted with them, at least in some form of the different varieties. One of the latest arrivals belonging to this group, the Crimson Rambler, will apparently be even more generally disseminated than any of the low-growing forms, and this is on account of the intrinsic beauty and worth of the variety itself, and, also, because in the cold northern region our choice of hardy climbing roses has heretofore been comparatively poor, being practically confined to the few hybrid varieties of the Prairie rose. In the middle and southern regions they have been more favored, being able to raise and winter the varieties of the Ayrshire and Noisette roses.

The difficulties of a severe climate have prevented our northern people, or at least have hindered them, from planting roses generously in their gardens, and though the hardiness and the habit of the dwarf polyanthas are favorable to easy protection we have not yet become accustomed to plant them freely in beds and masses along borders. It will yet be learned that such use of these plants will greatly enrich our gardens and form a feature of the highest beauty. With the purpose of suggesting this style of planting the polyanthas, where the opportunity appears favorable, the illustration on this page is presentcd. The circular bed represents a mass of the Little White Pet, which has now been in position a number of years, with uniform satisfaction from year to year. The plants grow vigorously, branch numerously, receive but very little protection, merely a covering of autumn leaves. Even if left entirely uncovered they are injured only at the tips of the shoots by frost, in winters when the temperature falls to zero or ten to fifteen degrees below; and as the injured tips are all cut away at the spring pruning, the frosting, if it occurs, is no real detriment to the plants. The habit of this variety is to bloom very freely in June, literally covering itself with flowers. The blooming season extends over a period of three weeks or more. After this there is a new growth and another season of bloom in August. The amount of bloom at this time is quite as great as in June, and as lasting.

After the leaves have fallen in autumn the bed should have a liberal dressing of old rotted manure, or, if this is not available, then an application should be made in the spring of some complete fertilizer.

Other varieties of the polyantha class are also desirable to plant in masses; Mignonette and Paquerette have smaller flowers than White Pet, and they bloom more continuously, and not in the marked periods that characterize the latter.

BED OF LITTLE WHITE PET ROSES.

Clothilde Soupert, and the sport from this variety, Pink Soupert, are both desirable for outdoors as well as for pot culture. The flowers are of medium size, very handsome and fragrant, and the blooming is continuous through the whole fine season. The winter protection for these last named varieties, which are partly of tea origin, would require to be given a little more carefully and thoroughly, but on the whole the trouble in this respect would be light. These roses can be planted freely and without fear of disappointment

## FLOWERS OF SOUTH FLORIDA.

IT is a pleasure to cultivate flowers of the tender varieties in this sunny land, as we can plant in the open ground our tenderest favorites, only giving them a little attention in the way of water and trimming, and perhaps a little shade for some sorts during the summer months.

Geraniums grow into strong, thrifty bushes, but can be kept back by frequent pruning and starting new plants from slips. A rose geranium started from a small slip fourteen months ago, although frequently pruned, is now three feet high and quite as much in diameter, a mass of great green leaves, not a branch showing; a perfect plant.

This climate and soil seem to be adapted to the growth of the canna, which thrives in all situations in the greatest luxuriance, blooming the year around. The Queen Charlotte and Madam Crozy are perfect wonders in size of flower, profusion of bloom and production of seed. A fitting companion of these two lovely sorts is our native Canna flaccida, the orchid-flowered canna, which deserves more attention than it receives; it is an everbloomer, growing quickly from seed, blooming when small and continuing all the year round to bloom and grow, sending out new side shoots which soon flower. It can be grown in the garden or in a pot in the window. Its flowers are three inches wide by five long; its dainty petals of a light lemon yellow, shading at the base to a rich orange, are beautifully crimped at the edges, the whole flower looking more like some dainty orchid than like a canna.

The wonderful new cannas Italia and Austria, for which one thousand dollars, it was said, was offered the originator and refused, are crosses between our Canna flaccida and Madam Crozy, and while our native canna is a beauty in itself, I have no doubt more fine varieties will be originated by crossing it with other varieties. Another of our wild beauties that has

been neglected by the flower dealers is the Crinum Americanum, which is only listed by two or three florists outside of Florida, yet it is easy to grow, and is a perfect beauty. I have set bulbs of this crinum in sand in the garden, in muck at the edge of a ditch, and they grew and bloomed, only requiring plenty of water, showing that it is not a fussy plant. As a pot plant it is a success. It is evergreen. and its long, fresh, rich green leaves, are pretty without the flowers. But its greatest beauty appears in its umbels of pure white, lily-like flowers, equal to any of the high priced lilies now in general cultivation, none of which can surpass it in fragrance.

Along the canal bank we find the rubber tree, Ficus aurea, which is found only in the most southern part of the state and then only in limited quantities. There are a few large trees, but the most of them are only from one to four feet high, but as they are of quick growth they will soon be large trees.

BUTTERFLY ORCHID.

The Ficus elastica, the rubber tree of commerce, is cultivated here in the open ground. It is not a native, but is imported from South America and seems to thrive as well here, as in its native home.

But the oddest of our wild beauties is the air plant, Tillandsia utriculata, which grows on the limbs of rough-barked trees. I have seen large trees nearly covered with this curious form of vegetation from tiny baby plants resembling fringy blue-green grass, to big plants with leaves two to three feet long by two inches wide, beautifully recurved. The flowers are odd, and the buds, which are slow to open, are of a lovely crimson color, and really prettier than the open flower. Cover a block of wood with moss or get a limb of any rough barked tree. and wire the plants fast and hang up in a window and they will grow and bloom, only requiring a little water in their centers two or three times a week. We tie them to our veranda posts and they are very odd and pretty.

Another odd and interesting plant growing right beside the tillandsia on the bark of the trees, is the Butterfly Orchid, Epidendrum venosum. The plant is composed of a mass of green bulbs and narrow, thick, green, waxy leaves. The flowers are produced in spikes, being an inch or more in diameter, of beautiful shades of pink and greenish chocolate color, changing in a few days to a rich gold and chocolate. The flowers are very dainty and resemble butterflies, as they swing on their long flower stalks. They can be grown on bark or blocks in the same manner as the air plant, but they appear in their greatest beauty in their wild state on our native trees, a sight once seen never forgotten. J, BELDEN.

*Linton, Fla.*

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## AN INTERESTING BIRD.

"And drowned in yonder living blue,
The lark becomes a sightless song."
*Tennyson.*

We all have read in prose and verse of the skylark of western Europe; how many of us know we have a skylark of our own? Perhaps the European lark is the better singer, but John Burroughs, writing from England, says his song is not very conspicuous, "a stranger not aware of his presence and intent on the general landscape would miss it altogether," or to that effect, and as the two species are closely allied we may suppose their music to be of the same general character. Not only is our lark's song missed but he is himself unknown to most people, though before their eyes every day. Only a few trained observers see birds they have not learned to see; all notice robins and swallows, but the shore lark, *Otocoris alpestris praticola*, as our bird is called, seems invisible, though singing with all his might close by. It was many years before I learned to know him; as a boy I thought in winter he was one or two snowbuntings strayed from the great flock —he is about the same size, is whiter on the wing than at rest, has the same occupation, and a somewhat similar cry in flight. In summer I never see him. In Massachusetts he is merely a resident from October to April, and is not a skylark at all, going to Labrador to sing and breed. As a winter visitor he is found as far south as Washington. Here in Western New York he comes in February, breeds in early spring and goes in November, breeding also in Minnesota. Whether he is found in all the region thus outlined I do not know, very likely his range to the northwest is still greater. Should I lose my calendar I should know by the appearance of the lark that the date was February 15th, the mercury may be at zero but that is none of his affair. Other winter birds—as the Arctic sparrow and yellow bird, the latter disguised as a female, seek deep ravines, where, amidst thick brushwood and tall weeds, they are protected from cold and storm; but the shore lark betakes himself to high, open fields, less perhaps to enjoy the keen north wind than to find earth from which the gales have swept away the snow, exposing the seeds he is after.

A completed nest with an egg in it is reported from Minnesota March 13th, three days after the first bluebird, and here the young are out of the nest before the grass has more than the merest suspicion of greenness; hardly more able to fly than young chickens. But they have good legs and, so far as I can tell, are not at all cast down by the grayness and chill of the only world they ever have seen. I have never found the nest and eggs, but quite heavy snows must fall upon them. And what can the sitting mother bird do then? These snows are rather transient and she may remain beneath them, for a while at least, until they melt perhaps. The ruffled grouse sits down and lets the snow cover him and digs long burrows in soft snow merely for warmth; the lark would be safe there so long as she could live without food. A poet sent out to celebrate such a bird's nest in verse, and finding it drifted under, with a howling gale whirling the snow dust round his ears, would have

THE SHORE LARK.

a lively time, and small use for his stock phrases about flowering sprays, verdant leas, sunny skies, and the like. In June and earlier the shore lark becomes a skylark. The old world lark is said to climb a spiral stair with his nest at its foot; ours goes drifting through the sky, keeping at about the same height from the ground, going up and coming down a little, turning in all directions in a mazy dance as he flutters slowly along, going a mile, perhaps, before sailing down in a long slant he comes back to earth, but not back to his nest, so far as I know. Even now his song does not cease,—mounting a stone he goes right on. The English lark is lost to sight sometimes, and ours is often hard to see; you will listen and look some little time before you get your eye on him. Soon after midsummer he ceases to sing, and a month or two is spent picnicing, like the snowbuntings in winter, in small flocks; as autumn comes on he is alone and sings again until he departs. He is nocturnal in winter; if you wish to know whether he is to be found in your fields, go out in a calm snow-storm in the evening when no sound is heard but the soft crush of the snowflakes and listen. A soft snow-fall makes him as jubilant as

a gentle spring rain does a flock of robins, and you will, if he is present, soon hear his Chee-che-ch-ch-ch-ch-chee, the notes fairly tumbling over each other in the middle. As a skylark he sings it constantly over and over, but now he waits long enough for a comrade to repeat it. The hermet thrush would not allow this sort of thing was melody at all, but if I like the general character of a bird I like his attempts to sing, and I greatly like and esteem the shore lark. And I suspect the old world lark owes more to his domestic disposition and the sum of his qualities than to his ability as a songster. Our lark walks like a crow and is no more likely to light in a tree than is a goose; a fence or wall is the only substitute for the earth or a stone. His back is the tint of road dust, he is white beneath, a large black crescent with its horns pointing upward is on his breast and a smaller one on each side of his head, the ear coverts make a pair of sharp and slender "horns," not very conspicuous, however. Look him up this winter, you may learn many things not set down here.

E. S. GILBERT.

*Canaseraga, N. Y.*

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## POLYANTHA ROSES.

In a late number of the *Journal of Horticulture*, Mr. David R. Williamson, among other things, offers the following notes on Polyantha roses:

Polyantha roses are, I am gratified to learn, steadily increasing in popularity, nevertheless I think they should, assuredly, be more widely cultivated. They have many valuable attributes. They are easy of culture, extremely hardy of character, and vigorous in habit; they flower early and late, and produce multitudes of miniature and extremely graceful flowers. Some of this family are very fragrant, such for example is the pure white Anna Marie de Montravel, which is surely one of the sweetest roses in existence.

For many of the finest of the Polyantha roses we are primarily indebted to that consummate French rosarian, the late M. Guillot. From his famous Lyons rosarium came Ma Paquerette in 1875, Mignonette in 1881, and the beautiful rose-colored Gloire de Polyantha in 1887. Dubreuil has given us two veritable gems—Etoile d'Or and Perle d'Or, of which the latter rose, with its lovely orange center, is perhaps the most attractive of the Polyantha race.

Of climbing varieties, whose number is as yet sufficiently circumscribed, the most valuable are undoubtedly Polyantha grandiflora, a splendid pillar rose, and Turner's Crimson Rambler, one single truss of which produced last summer in my garden 120 flowers. One of the most valuable qualifications of this phenomenal rose, originally brought by an engineer from Japan, is that of retaining its remarkable brightness for several weeks, especially when grown, as it is here, in a partially shaded situation. I have seen the original plant of this world famous variety in the garden of the late Mr. Charles Jenner, near Edinburgh. He was a brother of Sir William Jenner, the head of a great firm and a distinguished cultivator of Alpine flowers.

## EARLY SPRING FLOWERS.

NOT every one knows that a few branches of lilac removed from the bushes about the first of February, will make a beautiful bouquet of flowers two or three weeks later. Cut good sized branches from the top of the bush, so as to be sure to get the ones that will blossom. Put them in vases or fruit jars with plenty of water in a warm, sunny window; a little charcoal or ammonia in the water will keep it sweet, as well as be a fertilizer for the plant. In two or three days the leaf buds will open, when the buds will

BRANCHES OF LILAC, PEACH AND CHERRY FORCED INTO BLOOM IN A VASE OF WATER.

show. In an incredibly short time the beautiful flowers will appear. They will not be full sized blossoms and the clusters are not very large, but they are lilacs just the same and their fragrance will fill the room. Any of the varieties do well, but the Persian is perhaps the best sort for the purpose. Unless they have plenty of sun the color of the flowers is very pale, while if they are left away from the window they are very likely to be pure white.

Branches of apple, pear, peach, plum and cherry can be treated in the same way and prove a great addition to the window garden. It is a great surprise to almost every one to see the rootless and almost leafless branches in full bloom. The branches can be cut later than February first, but the earlier they bloom, the better, as they then take their own time to the work—later, they hurry so fast that they are inclined to open before they are ready, causing the blossoms to be imperfect and short lived.

Almost any early plant from the garden or woods can be forced in this way; ferns and violets can be dug while the frost is yet in the ground, and when brought to the house will soon grow beautifully.

The violets will bloom quickly and be gone before the ones outdoors have woke up from their winter nap. To do this, however, the plants must be marked in the fall, so one can find them readily.

Z.

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## FRUIT GROWING IN MARYLAND AND DELAWARE.

AT the annual meeting of the Peninsula Horticultural Society, held at Milford, Delaware, the past winter, the discussions revealed the fact, as assented to by the members, that more and better fruit was produced by appropriate spraying, and that such fruit bore shipment better than that which was unsprayed.

PEARS FOR MARKET CULTURE.—For profitable culture the Manning, Bartlett Duchess, Keiffer and Lawrence pears, were considered the best selection.

CRIMSON CLOVER.—A member stated that the farmers of that region had greatly reduced their manure bills since they had practised raising crimson clover. They rely on this crop turned in green for a supply of ammonia, and then supplement with it what is needed for each particular crop of potash and phosphoric acid.

PLUMS.—Of the domestic or American varieties of plums, the red plums of the wild goose type had sold at higher prices than either blue or green kinds. Mr. Kerr considered the native varieties superior to the well known sorts of foreign origin or parentage. He named six Japan varieties advisable to plant—these are Yosebe, Red June, Abundance, Berckmans, Maru and Chabot. Willard he thought of little value.

NUTS.—One member was raising five varieties of hazel nuts, and fourteen of chestnuts, besides pecans and Persian and Japan and black walnuts, butternuts and shellbarks. He showed a Japan chestnut measuring six and a quarter inches in circumference and of a quality equal to our native chestnut. A single burr of the Paragon chestnut was shown containing seven large nuts. One member had a pecan tree which was fourteen years old and had borne nuts for four years. English walnut trees are growing in the State which measure nearly two feet in diameter and produce good crops.

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Plants require care, weeds do not. Pity 'tis, 'tis true.

## THE HERBACEOUS SPIRÆAS.

THE HERBACEOUS Spiræas are popularly known as "meadow sweets" and by all are considered to be a most valuable class of border plants, as they are perfectly hardy and free from all insect pests, and give very satisfactory results even when grown in poor soil and in unfavorable situations.

But in order to produce the best results they should be given an open, sunny place and a very deep, well enriched soil, also sufficient space in which to properly develope themselves. As soon as the ground becomes frozen in December, a good mulching of well decayed stable manure should be given, and the coarser portion removed when the weather becomes settled in the spring. The varieties with variagated foliage require a little more attention, however, and should be planted in a partially shaded situation and freely watered during seasons of drouth. All the species flower in the greatest profusion, and while they are excellent border plants, are also of great value for cutting. Good plants can be obtained from dealers, and the supply may be readily increased by a careful division of the older plants, care being taken to perform the operation early in the spring so as to enable the plants to become well rooted before hot, dry weather sets in.

SPIRÆA ARUNCUS is popularly known as the "Goats Beard." It is a very effective species and one of the best of border plants. It is a native of England, grows from three to four feet in height, and blooms during the months of June and July. The foliage is very handsome, the leaves being of pinnate form and of a light green color. Flowers are a creamy white and borne in large branched panicles.

S. ASTILBOIDES is a Japanese species growing about two feet in height, and blooms during the months of June and July. It has handsomely cut, compound foliage, and showy, branched panicles of pure white flowers.

S. FILIPENDULA is the popular and well known "Drop wort." It grows about three feet in height and blooms during the months of May and June. It is a native of England, and is one of the best perennials grown. It has rich, dark green, fern-like leaves, and large, dense, showy heads of clear white flowers.

S. FILIPENDULA FL. PL. is a variety of the above with double white flowers which remain a long time in perfection, and are well adapted for cutting.

S. KAMTSCHATKA (gigantea) is a native of Siberia. It grows about six feet in height and blooms from June until August. It does best in a shady situation. The leaves are very broad and deeply lobed. The pure white flowers are in dense panicles.

S. LOBATA. This American species is the popular "Queen of the Prairie." It grows from three to four feet high, and blooms during June and July. It is one of the richest colored species, the deep carmine rose colored flowers being produced in immense clusters on tall marked stems.

S. PALMATA. This is one of the finest hardy perennials and well deserves a place in every collection. It is a Japanese species, growing about three feet in height and blooms from June to September. It has elegant palmate leaves and showy, loose terminal panicles of deep crimson flowers.

SPIRÆA FILIPENDULA GROWING IN A MASS.

S. PALMATA ELEGANS is a rare and beautiful variety of the above, differing only in the color of its flowers which are pure white, occasionally tinged with cream, and with deep crimson anthers which produce a very rich effect.

S. ULMARIA FL. PL. This is an English species and is popularly known as the "Double Meadow Sweet." In cultivation it attains a height of three feet, and blooms during June and July. The double white flowers are very handsome and highly esteemed for cutting.

S. ULMARIA AUREA VARIEGATA has handsome golden variegated leaves while the foliage of S. argentea variegata is beautifully variegated with silver and green. The last two varieties require a little extra care and attention, but all deserve a place in every flower border.

CHAS. E. PARNELL.

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## SPRING AND SUMMER IN MY GARDEN.

JULY 11.—Last spring I ordered a Heliopsis Pitcherianus, a plant I had never seen. It was growing when it came and it kept right on unchecked, apparently, by its journey by mail. It is now three feet high and is in flower, a yellow sunflower-like head at the summit of each erect stem, with more coming upon the branches from the joints below. The leaves are large and smooth, in opposite pairs and the plant has a bold appearance. If hardy, and I suppose it is, age and larger growth will make a nice plant of it. It is a near relative of the sunflower. Heliopsis means "It looks like the sun," and it does. The creeping rose, Rosa Wichuraiana, or as some call it, R. luciæ, is beginning to open its buds. Some of the flowers have another row of petals this year or a part of one, as if trying to become double. It is not very showy and does not catch your eye from afar, but it is fine and interesting for all that. I wrote a year ago that no rose insects ever ate it. This season I found a single rose slug on it. I do not expect to see him again and there are no more, I think. One slug in three years is not so very bad, indeed the leaves are so stiff, and hard, and shiny, one would hardly think them eatable. The snow drifts heavily over it here which is no doubt better for it than alternate freezings and thaws, but it seems ironclad so far. With a very dull autumn last year, it made shoots six feet long. I am pretty sure the roots of the maples are too near, and I intend to move it before it grows again. Its scarlet heps are said to be showy in fall and early winter. My plant has not yet formed any. I do not think much of rockeries, as generally made, a bed of annuals or perennials, an evergreen, or anything else, in the same place would be better, but a good variety of boulders braided over with the creeping rose might appear well. I read somewhere that it would climb a trellis, and maybe it will. It is evergreen with me except for a few days in spring when the

old leaves drop and the new ones are not yet grown.

The California poppy, Eschscholtzia Californica, is here, a good plant which no one should be without. It self-sows with me and is easily transplanted. Its season of bloom is long, especially if its young seed pods are picked off, and few flowers are more showy than its large erect blossoms of the brightest yellow, shading into rich orange toward the center. It is perennial in its native state and intends to be so here. The light green, finely divided foliage, with a tip of red on each little leaflet, is really most graceful and pretty; it has every good quality except fragrance. Beginning to bloom when quite small it branches and spreads and flowers without limit.

JULY 12.—No one who wishes a world of bright flowers on the easiest terms can neglect the annual calliopsis or coreopsis. It seeds heavily and self-sows abundantly; to thin out or transplant is the process. The foliage is long and there is no telling how great the variety in size and markings may be. There are only two colors, velvety brown and bright yellow, but the combinations are endless. Some are all brown, but no one ever saw a clear yellow one. Here are brown ones strewed over with the finest golddust, others are clouded or mottled all over with an equal supply of the two colors. This has a narrow zone of yellow round its edge, then a

SPIRÆA ARUNCUS.

wide one, and so on; a small bed may have twenty different kinds and some are slightly fragrant. But the perennial Coreopsis lanceolata,* a splendid clear yellow flower, which last year bloomed till hard frost, was dead this spring, acting like a biennial. If it is not the latter it does not like my soil. You will have a beautiful plant if you succeed in growing it.

E. S. GILBERT.

*Coreopsis lanceolata is quite hardy in all parts of the northern States.—ED.

SPIRÆA ASTILBOIDES.

## THE BAY WINDOW.

THE bay-window is a protest against ice and snow and winds that freeze. It is a successful attempt to bring a corner of the tropics into the inclement north. True it is, the plants do not attain the size and lustiness of those found in great tropical gardens or original jungles. But a bay-window filled with choice plants, aided by a reasonable imagination, will furnish the mind with well-founded ideas how nature must look where man at noon casts no shadow. Tropical and subtropical are both the same to the window, and we can travel by slow and easy stages from the oleanders of Palestine, and the caladiums of Egypt to the palms of Trinidad, and the begonias and orchids of the Amazon and Borneo. As we gaze at our chrysanthemums and lilies, we see the slant-eyed beauties of Japan, the island Yankeedom of the mystic East.

The chrysanthemum was a great gift to flower lovers. How magnificent a bay-window looks with a well selected assortment. Upon shelves, rising at an inclination, the show from without is glorious. Yellows as vivid as the sun, bronzes as pronounced as the cheeks of the Sioux maiden, whites as pure as the snow on the Fuji Yama, red and crimson as glowing as sunset, make up an effect, charming and delightful. Then, is there anything that will give us a more complete idea of tropical luxuriance than the monstrous leaves of the giant alocasia? The parson had one in a ten-inch pot in the parsonage, and it was like unto king David, "A wonder to many," securing the red ribbon of the first prize at a floral exhibition. He never sees a begonia but what his thought runs to the damp slopes nigh the the Orinoco, and Charles Kingsley's ravings of delight when he first saw begonias amid the tropical primeval forests of Trinidad. He has seen some glorious specimens of Begonia metalica in bay-windows and wondered whether or not Kingsley's were finer. Kingsley, you know, was a parson, and it is fancied sometimes that a feature of a genuine parson is to love flowers.

In the bare tenements of our large cities there are, of course, no bay-windows. Yet who shall say, but that the single geranium in the pot on the window-sill does not bring to the minds of the humble workers the gorgeous displays in the bay-windows of the wealthy. The little pot and its bright, cheerful and fragrant leaves and flowers, is the link which connects the humble room with the palaces of nobles and kings and the luxurious presentations of nature.

More than once the parson has stopped to admire the pots of flowers on the long flights of stairs. He has gone up such stairs and chatted with the women who owned the little pots. Once he found a pot of gloxinias, the finest he ever saw. Another day he discovered a magnificent fuchsia. There were more eardrops on that plant than he ever dreamed such a plant could bear. How he praised the flowers, and how delighted were the owners to hear the praises of their pets. Love of the beautiful makes us all of one kindred.

Wandering about his parish the parson found a bay-window that was a perfect satisfaction. It was quite large, perfectly square and exposed to the south. Up one

corner and along the ceiling wandered a noya full of its unique flowers. There were a couple of singular cacti; both were more than six feet high and one was full of pink, tubular flowers. At once the parson's mind ran back over a few years, when as a young soldier, he was doing duty on the borders of New Mexico. A vision of miles of sand, bare except for cactus and sage brush, rose to his mind; of murderous Cheyennes and Utes; of rifle shots and fierce war-whoop. Thus he dreamed while looking on those two cacti in that square bay-window. Underneath the window-sill was what we might call a trough. In it were water plants, arums, lilies and rushes. A little island was in the center. In the water were a couple of newts. On the island was a small turtle which kept a sharp lookout over the domain. The lady said there were fishes among the rushes and lily pads, but I failed to see them. But what a little realm was this! How the imagination could riot! No man could forbear, while looking at the newts, to picture to himself the immense cayman in the South American river with the naturalist Waterton seated on his back steering the reptile to the shore; or of Hornaday, shooting gavials on the sandbars of the sacred rivers of India. The parson thought of other things as he gazed on that bay-window lake. Of monstrous turtles, and youthful hours spent with hook and line; for he was always a lover of the "gentle art of angling," as good old Isaac Walton calls fishing.

So it is the parson sees in the culture of flowers a means and stimulus to useful and delightful knowledge. A bay-window thus becomes an educator. Many deem a book valuable in proportion as it is suggestive. If such be true of a book, what shall we say of a bay-window filled with flowers contributed by all the regions on the globe! For florists ransack the uttermost parts for some wonderful plant or shrub.

It is a comfortable thought that not many houses of any size are now built without a bay-window. They are ornamental when architecturally considered. Within, the plants on the brackets and stands soon become members of the family. Old and young cherish and love them. In every sense the world is the better for its bay-windows and their flowers.

THE PARSON.

***

## SPRING FLOWERS.

In a lecture before the members of the Horticultural Association at Newport, England, the Rev. H. Ewbank speaks of winter and spring flowers in his garden, in that favored locality, the Isle of Wight. He says:

I was once walking along the road in December with a blossom of Iris stylosa in my hand, and I happened to meet Sir W. Hutt. A flower was certain to draw him, and he stopped me and asked me what I had chanced to get hold of. I told him at once, and he then wanted to know where and how it was grown. I explained to him that it came from the open border, and called for no attention at all, whereupon he remarked, "How foolish I am to spend so much money for coals to grow orchids if you can do a thing of this sort without any expense." Iris stylosa is of a most captivating lavender color, very delicate indeed, and quite certain to please.

SPIRÆA PALMATA ELEGANS.

SPIRÆA FILIPENDULA.

Now, we would not say that it is foolish to spend money to grow orchids, for they are fascinating in their beauty and their picturesque forms, but we can appreciate the correctness of the comparison between orchids and irises. And the iris in its great variety of forms can be raised in every garden with very little trouble. It must be that they will find many more admirers and cultivators than at present. Increased attention is now being given, deservedly, to the Japan irises, but all kinds will yet be largely employed in open air gardening.

In the same lecture he says:

"The early flowers of the year sparkle like jewels in the ground—so bright and various they are. The string of names that could be given would utterly weary you—muscaris, chionodoxas, scillas, fritillarias, crocus, anemones, narcissi, trilliums, and a thousand more, form a concatenation of beauty which could not be exceeded."

How very true this is one can only know who has been used to seeing these early spring flowers in profusion, in the garden. Of the anemone in its various forms he makes some discriminating notes. "In Palestine," he says, "the masses of Anemone fulgens are called the 'Saviour's Blood-drops,' and in some places you can hardly walk at all without stepping on them."

The narcissus he treats quite at length. Some species of narcissus which "refuse to do well in many gardens on the mainland" blossom and increase in the Isle of Wight "in a most free and satisfactory manner." He commences this part of his subject by saying:

The genus narcissus now comes in turn before us. The wild daffodil is a native of England, and it is found abundantly in the Isle of Wight, but not in Scotland or Ireland. Canon Ellacombe tells us that "there are thirty-seven distinct species, besides many varieties and hybrids, and its headquarters are in the South of Europe. A few, however, are found in Northern and Western Asia, one in Teneriffe, and a few in North Africa. None of the family is found wild in America." Nurserymen's catalogues have become perfectly bewildering; so many varieties are so nearly alike. This flower has always been a favorite with the poets. Thus Keats sings:

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever;
It's loveliness increases. It will never
Pass into nothingness.
In spite of all,
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,
Trees old and young, sprouting, a shady boon
For simple sheep; and such are Daffodils,
With the green world they live in."

And Herrick cannot be surpassed:

"Fair Daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon.
As yet the rising sun
Has not attained his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hastening day has run
But to the evensong."

***

PRUNING VINES AND SMALL FRUIT BUSHES.—The pruning of out-door grape vines should be finished this month, and the earlier the better. No doubt it should be done in November and December, but it should never be delayed later than the present month. The pruning of currants, gooseberries and berry bushes should also now soon be finished.

# Letter Box.

In this department we shall be pleased to answer any questions relating to Flowers, Vegetables and Plants, or to publish the experiences of our readers. JAMES VICK.

### Sacred Lily.

Please tell me how to treat a sacred lily after it has bloomed, and oblige A FRIEND.

Throw it in the waste barrel. The best advice that can be given.

### Perennial Phlox Blooming First Season.

If I get plants of the perennial phlox this spring will they bloom this season? R. McD.
*Chatham, Ont.*

Yes. Set the plants in good soil and take good care of them and they will bloom this summer.

### Potting the Bulbs of Tuberous Begonias.

I wish to start my tuberous begonias soon. I have been looking at the little bulbs to-day, and I cannot tell from their appearance how they should be set in the ground. Will you please explain?
*Albany, N. Y.* MRS. H. VAN A.

The stems start from the concave or hollow side. Set them in the pot with the hollow side uppermost.

### Cutting Back the Rathbun.

Will you inform me in your next MAGAZINE whether the Rathbun blackberry should be cut back in the spring; that is, does it require what is called by fruit growers heading down, or heading back?
*Lancaster, Pa.* J. H. A.

A very complete answer to this inquiry may be found by reference to the communication on another page of the present issue, from Mr. A. F. Rathbun, the originator of the new berry. He notes the essential points in its cultivation.

### Japanese Morning Glory.

Will the Japanese Morning glories grow as rapidly and make a screen as quickly as the common morning glory? For my own part I think so much of the flowers of the common morning glory that it is difficult for me to believe that there can be anything more beautiful in that form. W. A. F.
*Ann Arbor, Mich.*

The Japanese morning glory is a vigorous, and rapid growing plant, quite as desirable as the common form with which to raise a thick, summer screen, it may be even better in this respect, though the actual rate of growth of both has not been accurately compared. The flowers are much larger and with handsome colors and markings.

### Sweet Peas not Blooming.

My sweet peas grew luxuriantly last year, but bore scarcely any flowers. Can you give any reason? I planted and tended them faithfully, selecting a choice spot for their growth. MABELLE M. B.
*Franklin Grove, Ill.*

The choice spot selected, the faithful culture and probably frequent rains, all these combined, favored the excessive growth of the plants, a condition not favorable to much bloom. Sweet peas planted on a piece of rich ground should not have much, or any cultivation, after the first stage is past, if the weather continues moist. If the vines had been gone over, pinching off the ends of the shoots it would have checked upward growth, made more branches, and have tended to bring the plants into bloom.

### Selection of Roses.

1.—Will two-year old plants of Moss roses bloom the first season?

2.—What would be a good collection of twelve varieties of roses that will bloom the first season, for one who knows nothing about their cultivation.
*Elmo, Mo.* E. R.

1.—Strong plants of Moss roses will bloom the first season.

2.—The following selection of twelve varieties will not fail to give satisfaction: Anna de Diesbach, Coquette des Alpes, General Jacqueminot, Fontenelle, La Reine, Magna Charta, Pœonia, Paul Neyron, Perfection des Blanches, Pierre Notting, Prince Camille de Rohan and Victor Verdier.

Either strong one year, or two year, plants of these varieties will bloom the first year.

### The Pomona Currant.

I notice that a new variety of currant, the Pomona, is offered for sale this spring. I have the Cherry and the Fay in my garden and I like them both. I am intending to plant an acre or more of red currants, and I should like to know more about the Pomona. Do you think it would be more profitable than the varieties I have? S. H. DEGRAW.
*New Jersey.*

Of this new variety of currant we can say that it has been thoroughly tested as a market variety for a number of years, coming into competition with both the Fay and the Cherry. The difference in size is slight and the quality is much superior to that of others, so that housekeepers who have become acquainted with it always purchase it in preference to them. In productiveness it greatly excels all other kinds, and has proven to be more profitable to the grower.

### The Fly Honeysuckle in Georgia.

A correspondent at Neunan, Ga., sent us the latter part of January some samples of the Fly Honeysuckle, Lonicera Xylosteum, in bloom, saying that it blossomed all through the winter. Another box of the specimens was received with a letter dated the 22nd of February. The flowers were in different stages, some fully open, others in bud, and the young leaves still remained attached to some of the shoots. The letter states:

"I send you some specimens of Lonicera Xylosteum after being covered with ice for two weeks. The buds went right on opening as soon as the ice was gone, and the tree is more beautiful than ever."

Our southern readers should note that this shrub is an especially valuable one for their gardens. It is quite hardy and is planted very freely in northern gardens.

### White Calla and Black Calla.

Our large white calla is four years old and last year it had several flowers, the largest of which was very beautiful. It measured ten inches across the top in width and eleven inches across the top in length, and the plant itself measured five feet in height, and now, January 12th, is again five feet high and will bloom within a few weeks.

1.—Please tell me how to cultivate the black calla. I have no success in getting it to grow, and would like to know how to start it from a dry bulb and rear it to a blooming plant.

2.—Will you please tell me how warm to keep a room for flower plants? MRS. G. G. W.
*New Castle, Pa.*

1.—The black calla should be started early in the autumn if possible. If the tubers are kept dormant until late there is more difficulty in getting them to start well. The general management should be similar to that of the common calla.

2.—A temperature of 60° to 70° will suit most house plants. Begonias do best at 65° to 70° and a moist air. Most house plants are well suited with a temperature of 58° to 65°.

### The Flowering Pea Bush.

I noticed in the January number of the MAGAZINE the description and illustration of the Flowering Pea bush, Desmodium penduliflorum. It occurs to me that this plant would be desirable to raise in this locality, as it is in bloom at a season when flowers are greatly in demand here for our Floral Fete, which is held annually the last of September, but also when there are comparatively few flowers. The hardy hydrangea proves very valuable for the purpose named and many of them are raised in our gardens. Can you advise the Flowering Pea bush for decorative use in the same manner? G. R. B.
*Saratoga Springs, N. Y.*

The Flowering Pea bush will be found of the greatest service at the time and for the purpose named. It produces its long flexible shoots, loaded with flowers and buds, in great numbers and they are in splendid condition at the end of September. The flowering shoots are particularly well adapted to work into wreaths and to be used in other ways. The plant is quite hardy and given a good soil and sufficient room it soon becomes a large specimen, producing hundreds of shoots. It can be recommended without any reservation.

### Gloxinia Bulbs.

When should I start Gloxinia bulbs to get good results, and how? A. L. C.
*Akron, Ohio.*

The bulbs if properly kept will commence to push their buds towards spring and they should then be placed in condition to grow. Sometimes this is as early as February, but as a rule in the month of March they will be found to be starting. Give each bulb a small pot, three-inch is about right, and use a light porous soil which is well enriched with old manure. Set the pots in a warm place and in a good light, but shaded from sunshine. As the plants grow and demand more room give them larger pots. The plants like heat and moisture. Do not keep them in a dry air. Supply plenty of water to the soil while the plants are growing, but carefully keep it from the leaves, as it tends to discolor them. After blooming, water should be gradually withheld until the bulbs are dry, when they may be set away in the pots until again wanted.

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**HAIR RENEWER**

Will restore gray hair to its youthful color and beauty—will thicken the growth of the hair—will prevent baldness, cure dandruff, and all scalp diseases. A fine dressing. The best hair restorer made.

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VICK'S ILLUSTRATED MONTHLY MAGAZINE
DEVOTED TO THE PROFITABLE CULTURE OF FLOWERS AND VEGETABLES

ROCHESTER, N. Y., MARCH, 1897.

*Entered in the Post Office at Rochester, N. Y., as second class mail matter.*

CHARLES W. SEELYE, Editor.

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## Country Summer Residents.

There is an increasing tendency at the present time for city residents to establish country homes for the summer. The freedom of the country, after it has once been experienced, is by most people never forgotten, and there is a fixed desire to enjoy country life during the summer and early autumn. As soon as the children are out of school for the summer vacation there is an annual procession towards the green fields and the shady woods, the hills of prospect and the streams and lakes of pure water. That this feature of our social life will be permanent there can be no doubt, for the physical advantages of three or four months of country life each year, cannot well be overestimated, and the pleasures are such as cannot be secured in city residence.

Although the presence of the adult male persons of the family is required in the city during business hours, yet by means of electricity and steam considerable distance may be traversed, and they are able to enjoy a few hours of pure country air in the evening and an hour or two in the morning as a special preparation for their city work. But the distances from business centers to summer residences must not be too great, hence the latter are established in the city suburbs, usually within a radius of twenty to thirty miles.

The comfort of the family demands poultry and eggs and milk and the produce of a good garden, and a horse or two must be kept, therefore one man, at least, will be required on the place. Hence, in view of the expense, the suggestion occurrs to many persons that it may be met by the profits that accrue from commercial fruit growing or the raising of poultry, or the conduct of a small or medium sized dairy. Such expectations or dreams may be pleasant as long as they remain as dreams, but putting such ideas into practice dissipates ruthlessly the fairy-like visions. Let no one think to recoup his purse by such ventures. In the nature of the case they must be failures. The unskilled fruit-grower or poultryman or dairyman, conducting his business through an agent, though the latter may be a practical man, cannot compete with trained workers whose maintenance depend on their labor. The rational course for proprietors of country residences to take, and the one that will give the greatest amount of enjoyment with the minimum of regrets, is to develop the horticultural capacities of their possessions. In the first place the family should have the benefits and comforts of a fruit and vegetable garden, and then the rest of the grounds can be devoted to lawn and trees, and flowering shrubs, and flowering plants of all kinds. To what extent the beautifying of the grounds shall be carried will depend upon the taste and the means of the proprietor. It may be little or much according to these circumstances, but it will always be productive of pleasure and satisfaction. The summer country residences of city dwellers will yet form a distinct and beautiful feature of rural life, and the social intermingling of city and of country dwellers will be to both influential for good.

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## A Few Words to Readers.

It is the prime object of this MAGAZINE to interest and instruct its readers in regard to all matters of gardening. The variety of subjects treated upon and the illustrations presented in its pages cover a wide range of gardening art. But the selection of the matter is not left wholly to editorial decision. Our readers are invited to come and ask for such information as they may especially desire. The Letter Box is an open meetiug place where it is our desire to learn the personal wants of any of our readers and give them what help we can. We wish all to understand that they are free to use our columns in making any inquiries they please on gardening subjects, and the information they ask will be afforded, if it can be given.

For mutual benefit we should also like to have our readers give any exceptional or particularly favorable experiences they may have.

There is still another way by which they can be mutually helpful. There are so many persons now who are using cameras and taking photographs we believe that, if it is borne in mind, many views of fine plants and garden scenes, etc., can be secured. If these should be sent in we should be enabled thereby to make engravings and publish them, thus allowing the great public to see many illustrations of beautiful objects which would otherwise be unknown to them. Send in the photographs and a few lines of explanation.

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## Coreopsis Lanceolata.

Our correspondent, Mr. E. S. Gilbert, who so pleasantly, from month to month, writes of his garden, mentions in this number the fact of his plant of Coreopsis lanceolata dying, in the winter, the first season after it was set out. Whatever may have caused the death of the plant it was not the lack ot constitutional vigor to endure the winter, if he had the plant true to name. The character of this species is well known, and it is hardy all over the country. It is a very valuable herbaceous perennial.

***

## The Casabanana.

This plant which a correspondent described in our last issue will probably be found to require a longer growing season to mature its fruits than we have north of Virginia and the Ohio river. But it may prove to be a desirable, rapid-growing summer climber, nevertheless.

Purify

Your blood with Hood's Sarsaparilla at this season. These are words of wisdom. Your blood is now loaded with impurities. These may develop into serious troubles unless they are promptly expelled. Take Hood's Sarsaparilla now and ward off attacks of typhoid fever,

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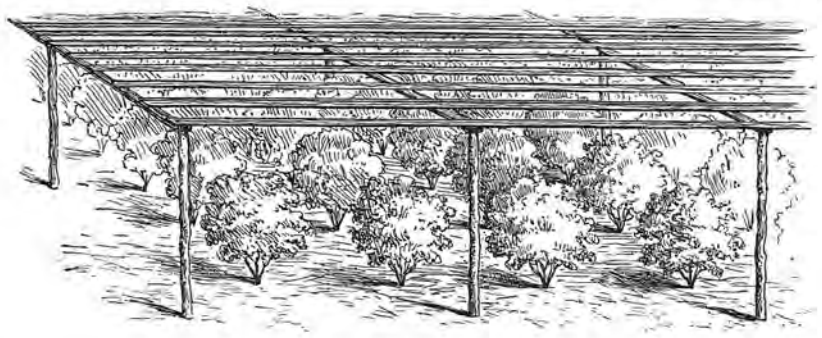
**Hood's Pills** are the only pills to take with Hood's Sarsaparilla.

## HOW TO GROW THE ENGLISH GOOSEBERRY.

THE English varieties of the gooseberry may be regarded as perfection. Persons who have never seen well grown fruit of the best varieties have no proper idea of their magnificent size and superb quality But as they are natives of such a moist, cool climate as England, they are rather difficult to grow in this country, and are very much more subject to mildew than our native varieties. This is true in the northern and cooler parts of our country, and the farther south we go the more difficult it is to grow them. In this latitude with common culture the foliage, from mildew, or the effects of the hot sun, nearly all drops off before midsummer. To raise the plants successfully here, and in most parts of the United States, requires special culture, and it is well in the first place to consider the requirements of the plant. Every one knows that the climate of England is cool and moist, and that they do not have the long hot sunny days we have, and we would infer from this that the English gooseberry in this climate would require to be grown under partial shade and in a cool, moist soil. That this is the fact experience has proven; some growers provide the shade by planting in orchards, under the fruit trees. This is a poor method, for while the trees provide the shade, they also with their roots rob the gooseberry plants of moisture and food. For the benefit of fruit growers I will give my method of growing the gooseberry and currant, and while a little more expensive in the first place, yet one is richly repaid in the great quantities of fine fruit the plants will produce.



ENGLISH GOOSEBERRIES GROWING UNDER A LATTICE SHADE.

The soil should be rich and deep, and if possible a slope facing the north should be chosen. It should also be sufficiently removed from any tree to prevent the roots robbing the plants. The soil should be plowed as deeply as possible, and it is also of great advantage to subsoil it. This will give a deep bed of loose soil, which will retain moisture much better and keep cooler than when plowed as ordinarily. The plants should be set six feet apart each way. After or before the plants are set I prepare posts each eight or ten feet long of some lasting timber; these are set in the ground two feet deep, and ten or twelve feet apart each way, among the gooseberry bushes; pieces of timber are are nailed from post to post, and on these are nailed slats or laths enough to make a half shade. This will furnish all the protection needed from the hot sun, and at the same time permit of a free circulation of air. After this is done I mulch the entire surface of the ground to the depth of a foot with straw or other litter, placing it up close around the plants. This mulch must be placed on thick enough to keep down all weed growth. and each fall an additional amount should be placed over the old. If the soil is rich to begin with and the mulching is attended to properly, it will be years before the plants require fertilizing, but if needed it can easily be applied by using coarse, strawy manure for the mulching material. The soil if mulched as directed will always remain cool and moist, and fruit of the greatest excellence, and in the greatest quantities, will be produced.

Grown under this method the plants will rarely be affected with the mildew, but as a further preventive the plants can be sprayed with the Bordeaux mixture just as the leaves are putting out, and again just before the blooming season. The increased size and productiveness of even our common sorts grown by this method is wonderful.

MARTIN BENSON.

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## FLOWERS AT FUNERALS.

A correspondent of the *American Florist* very appropriately gives some truths about flowers at funerals:

I am glad to see seldom now in our papers that little paragraph, "Flowers gratefully declined." It began and was doubtless brought about by the abuse of the floral offering, particularly of the emblematic type such as express cars, locomotives, fire hydrants, safes, and many other hideous monstrosities, which, however well executed mechanically (for there was not a particle of art connected with it) has gradually brought disgust, and being frowned on brought about that declination. Now we see "gratefully declined" down at the lowest end of the social grade and soon it will pass off entirely. I may be allowed to say that, very recently being at the funeral of a very dear friend where was more than the ordinary use of flowers, but all of the finest taste, I felt while noticing them that the use of flowers on these sad occasions never could cease to exist, and it is the only thing that brings brightness and cheerfulness, if that is possible, to the hearts of those who have lost their dearest friend. Flowers are indispensible at these times, but brother florists be careful; it is not your skill and ingenuity the people are looking for at such times; it is fresh, sweet and simply arranged flowers.

***

*Tell your neighbors and friends about Vicks Magazine and get a Kodak.*

A clean nation has ever been a strong nation;

Fortify with SAPOLIO

## THE DAHLIA.

THE dahlia is one of the most desirable fall or late-blooming plants. The many beautiful varieties render it of inestimable value for brightening the flower garden after the spring and summer flowers are faded and gone. The colors are so rich and so varied, the flowers so symmetrical that they never fail to call forth exclamations of admiration from even the careless or indifferent observe.

The dahlia is one of our progressive plants; it has responded freely to the efforts made for its improvement. The numerous forms now in cultivation have all been derived from Dahlia variabilis since 1802. This shows what education will do for plants. Nature is perfectly capable of educating them as far as necessary for all practical purposes; but plants, like people have wonderful reserve material which may be brought into activity, when proper conditions prevail, or suitable opportunity is offered for higher growth and development. In all probability, if gardeners had not taken the dahlia in hand, it would be today very like the dahlia of a hundred years ago. There is incentive here to even amateurs to adopt some plant and persistently cultivate it, always keeping in mind the chief aim—to develop all its potential qualities.

The dahlia is indigenous to Mexico and Central America. It was named in honor of Andrew Dahl, a Swedish botanist, who was a pupil of Linnæus. The roots or tubers were at one time used as food in France, but were discarded on account of their acrid flavor. In classification the dahlia belongs to the great family Compositæ. It gives best results when grown in an open situation in a soil of rich, deep loam. The stems are so brittle and the flowers so heavy that they need to be carefully supported, or the first windstorm or heavy rain may prove disastrous.

Now during the cold weather, when we can no longer enjoy our real flower gardens, we may live in the wonderful profusion of flowers which the imagination is wont to create for us. Already when the winter has scarcely even begun, we are thinking of the bloom of the flowers next summer. We see how every plant responds to kindly care. We watch the roses with great expectation and the various shrubs just gaining a good foothold. Each year we plan to do a little more than we have accomplished the preceding one. The coming season the dahlia should not be forgotten by any one who has a garden. The flowers are beautiful, with their deep, rich, velvety hues and the brightest of colors.

The tubers which have been wintered in a cool, but frost-proof, dry cellar, or have been just purchased from a dealer, should be taken in hand early, and be given a warm place where they will sprout, ready to be planted out as soon as corn-planting time, or a week or ten days later. Commercial dahlia growers raise the plants in small pots, so that the tubers may not become too large for convenient handling in shipping. Such tubers need not be divided, but it is best

SHOW DAHLIAS, HALF SIZE.

to raise the plants each with a single stem, therefore, if two or more buds develop all can be rubbed off except one strong one. Tubers raised in the garden and kept over are usually large clumps, and these should be skillfully divided by cutting through the stem so that there shall be a good bud at the base of each piece and a tuber or more attached. Set the tubers in the ground so that the base of the young stem shall be about an inch below the surface. The plants can be set about in different parts of the garden where they will show to advantage. If planted together in a border allow a space of three or four feet between the large growing kinds, and a less distance to the dwarf varieties. Hoe the ground frequently while the plants are young and keep them growing vigorously. Supply stakes early to the plants of the tall growing kinds, and tie them so that heavy winds may not injure the brittle stems. A rich soil, good culture and plenty of water will produce luxuriant plants and an abundance of bloom.

MRS. W. A. K.

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## MANURING STRAWBERRIES.

*The American Cultivator* notes the effect of placing coarse stable manure on strawberry beds in the fall for the double purpose of winter protection and enriching the soil, stating in effect, that the result is a crop of weeds in the spring that nearly ruins the plantation.

Would it not be better, it says, to cover the plants with some material bulky and heavy enough to make a mulch that winds will not blow away, but with little or no manurial value, and then supplement this toward spring with some rotted manure mixed with enough potash and phosphate fertilizers to give the plants the kind and amount of nutriment the crop requires, and just when it is most needed? We always liked the plan of the old farmer who grew potatoes largely, and who every year drew and spread a good sized load of potato tops over his strawberry patch. The potato top is richer in potash than much barnyard manure, and the winter's freezing and thawing reduces its bulk into fine mould. It has no weed seeds, which is more than can be said of most stable manure. It protects the plants just when it is most needed, which is through the coldest weather, disappearing when spring opens, and when the plants require all the sunshine they can get. Those who cannot get strawberry plants may use evergreen boughs, but these would need to be removed when warm weather comes.

Keeping the soil moist is even more important for the strawberry crop than is making it rich. What fertility it needs must be given early to do the most good to the crop. It will do injury by making weeds grow, if its fertility cannot be used early in the spring. Under ordinary management, applying coarse manure in fall or winter, most of its strength goes to weeds that have to be fought, while before it is available the strawberries have suffered for lack of moisture and fertility that thoroughly decomposed manure with potash in some form would have supplied.

***

## COOKED CUCUMBERS.

It is said that green cucumbers, served in the same manner as summer squash, is an English dish, and that it is even more delicate in flavor than the squash. Who knows that this is so?

## SEEDS AND SEED SOWING.

SEED is a wonderful little casket, in which reposes asleep the future plant. It is sometimes called a plant-egg, a term that gives us a very good idea of its nature. To raise plants from seeds ought to be looked upon as a very easy operation. In nature, indeed, we see that plants come up in profusion from self-sown seeds. Let us consider a little plant-egg for a moment considerably magnified. Figure 1 represents a vertical section of a pansy seed, and this is a fair illustration of all other ordinary seeds. Here we have the core or shell *a*, which serves the useful purpose of protecting the vital inside parts. The letter *b* indicates the germ or embryo of the seed, which is nothing less than the rudimentary plantlet, with stem, leaves and bud complete, and *c* a body of nutritive material called albumen, and which corresponds closely to the white of an egg.

Now in order to make up the dormant embryo into life, we must put the seed into moist ground, and in a temperature that will stimulate growth. The dry seed absorbs moisture, causing it to soften and swell. But as the seed swells by absorbing moisture, if the weather should be too cold to incite growth, the germ in many cases will rot. In this way the best of seeds, if they happen to be of tender kinds, sometimes are killed from sowing them too early. With the swelling of the seed, and the enlargement of the embryo, the covering or case breaks, and the stem and leaves appear. This is called sprouting and is illustrated in figure 2, showing the plantlet of a morning glory with its leaves ascending and its roots growing downward into the soil. Up to to this time the germ has been feeding, otherwise it could not have grown. But on what has it fed? It has fed on the rich, nourishing albumen, which in most seeds surrounds the germ, and was stored there when the seed was formed on the parent plant.

Thus we have seen how seeds germinate under favorable conditions. But this important stage must not be passed, without considering certain details that have a practical bearing. In its germ state the plantlet is yet an extremely delicate organization, as compared with the developed plant. It is important to observe that when moisture and heat have been present to an extent sufficient to swell the seed and to start growth, such conditions must be fairly maintained until the plantlet has sufficient roots of its own to supply it with food and moisture from the soil. This requires that the seed bed should not become too dry, or the plants will die. Usually by sowing seed out doors in the spring, there is enough moisture in the soil to meet the needs of germination without artificial watering or other special help. Sometimes it may be otherwise. It is a good plan to shade the seed drill by scattering enough fine hay or lawn clippings over the line to a little more than hide the soil. This serves to break the sun's strong rays, as well as to shelter from the winds, in a way that surprisingly prevents the drying out of the soil. It is a course that is strongly to be recommended. When the seedlings are fairly through the earth most of this shade should be removed.

Watering the seed now with the pot or hose would occur to anyone, but shading, as directed, is better in outdoor seed-sowing. In the hot-bed or frame, watering with a fine rose answers very well, for under glass the air is comparatively moist and the wind has not much chance. The great objection to outdoor watering is that the surface becomes beaten and pasted down, and in some soils it bakes, with the result that it dries out faster than ever under the influence of a hot sun and driving wind. Many a batch of good seeds has been killed by the soil baking shortly after watering, so that the delicate plantlets could not reach the light. If the hay mulch is used, watering may be done on and through the hay and the surface soil will not bake very much.

A frequent fault is that of sowing seeds too deep, burying them so that they cannot reach the surface. In light soils the seeds may be planted somewhat deeper than in those that are heavy. Fix this general rule in mind and you will be safe: Never cover more than four timse the diameter of the seed. To cover petunia or portulaca seeds two inches deep and sweet peas or morning glory barely out of sight, is to invite failure, and many do fail at this point. To treat the finer seeds with a cover of fine, light earth, sifting it over them, is an excellent plan.

Before shading the seed line as directed, the soil over it should be carefully firmed. Simple as this matter is, it is most important, the disregard of which, leads to many failures and for which the seedsman is unjustly blamed. Proper firming consists in pressing the soil with the hoe blade, or, perhaps, a block of wood. In the case of the larger seeds to tramp along the line, one foot in front of the other, heel to toe, is the correct thing. Assuming that the soil is moderately dry—and seed sowing should never be done when it is in a wet, pasty condition—firming can hardly be overdone, it is often too lightly done. The need of it is obvious. Germination, as we have seen, depends upon the seed's absorbing moisture. Press the soil closely against the seed and the contact with moisture not only is increased, but with the particles of earth close together, the soil conserves moisture better, while the necessary porosity is not destroyed.

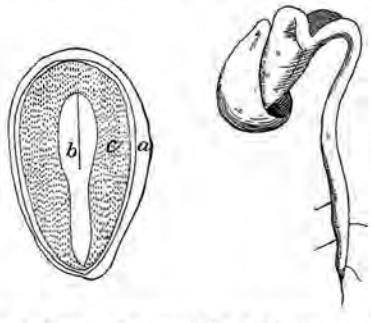


*Fig. 1. Pansy seed cut vertically to show rudimentary plantlet b, magnified.*



*Fig. 2. A Morning Glory seedling grown to the rootlet stage, magnified.*

Mention has been made of sowing seed in drills only, because in the writer's extended experience, he has found this much the better course. His favorite way of sowing in the border is to sow in a circular drill, say two or three feet across for annuals, which are not to be transplanted. When the seedlings are up and well under way, he thins them out to be from five to eighteen inches apart in the drill, according to the habit of growth. In this way he counts on a fine clump of each kind, the plants not crowded, and the center occupied as the plants spread.

ELIAS A. LONG.

## NEW METHOD OF GOOSEBERRY GROWING.

The article in this number by Martin Benson, on raising English Gooseberries, appears to contain a suggestion worthy of trial. An objection to the covering of slats appears to arise when one wishes to plant a considerable space with them, say an acre or more. For in this case the whole surface would be covered, and, apparently the shade would be too great. Noticing this we wrote to Mr. Benson in regard to it, and suggested the advisability of planting about four rows of gooseberry plants and then three or four rows of raspberries or blackberries, or leaving a space of ground to be used for annual crops. In a letter received fram Mr. Benson, in reply, he makes this statement:

Your remarks in regard to gooseberries noticed. I should have said that my gooseberries are in beds of only four to five rows each. On my place are some narrow ravines, with very rich soil, and only wide enough for three to five rows; these I set in gooseberries and and currants, and cover with slats, as directed, and mulch. As you suggest, it would be a good idea to plant three or four rows of gooseberries, then a few rows of raspberries and blackberries, and then gooseberries, and so on.

We hope that some of our readers may test this new method of gooseberry growing, and report results.

***

## AN INTERESTING CONTEST.

We draw the attention of our readers to the interesting "Geographical Contest" the Home Visitor Publishing Company of Philadelphia. Pa., are offering on page 80 They publish a thirty-six page illustrated magazine for the home circle containing departments for both old and young and entertaining serials and short stories.

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A hardy, rapid growing, Climbing Rose. Flowers dark crimson. A most profuse bloomer. A remarkable and most satisfactory Climbing Rose.

*Plants, 15 cts. each; two-year plants, 40 cts. each.*

**JAMES VICKS SONS,**
ROCHESTER, N. Y.

### EGG PLANTS.

THERE are a great many persons even here in the south, and very fair gardeners too, who do not make a success of growing egg plants. A careless cultivator is most likely to fail in the attempt always and, yet, just one or two requirements met and egg plant growing is as simple and easy as that of any crop I could name.

There are not a great many varieties and one will not care to have any better kind than the well known "New York Improved."

The chief obstacle to be guarded against after one has procurred first-class seeds, is that of the active, ubiquitous, tiny insect known as the flea beetle.

To insure success in this direction I have made it a practice for twenty years of having the plant frame for growing the plants elevated four to five feet above the surface of the ground. Posts are inserted and a three by three frame placed upon them with a slight declension to the south. These frames are made out of five-inch planks. Holes or cracks are left in the bottom to ensure perfect drainage. Good garden soil is put in and firmly compacted to a depth of three inches. The frames are made ready ten days or so before time for sowing the seeds, and the glass put on and kept on. A rag or two saturated with turpentine, or a small vial of bi-sulphide of carbon is put inside the frame and a slight crack left in it. If there are any flea beetles in the soil they will soon get out and they can not get back. A month or six weeks before the time for setting out in the open, the seeds are sown in five-inch drills (very shallow) lightly covered and firmed with hand or board, the soil watered to a reasonable saturation, and the glass put on and kept on until germination is accomplished. In ten days or two weeks after coming up the young plants can be thinned and those drawn out are reset between the original rows. They are then allowed to get strong and stocky for transfering to the open ground as soon as frost will permit, which with us is during the first week in April, a few usually being risked a little earlier, say March 20-25th. It is a great advantage to have well grown plants with a mass of roots to put out early. Even in the south it is a poor business to attempt growing this plant by sowing the seeds in the open. The crop will be too late, and furthermore too uncertain, if the start is delayed until seeds can be sown in the open ground.

With soil suitably rich, and strong plants to set early, there will be no obstacle that cannot be overcome. The plants should be set three feet apart each way. Sometimes the false potato beetle puts in an appearance on the plants, but its presence is promptly recognized and the danger readily turned aside. It is well to keep on hand a little clay dust or sifted ashes, and if needed taint some of it with kerosene oil and sprinkle the plants while the dew is on. Cultivate shallow, and as frequently as may be necessary to keep down weeds. If the appearance of the plants a little while after setting out indicates a need of food, each plant may, and should be top-dressed around with a heaping tablespoonful of nitrate of soda, sprinkled evenly in every direction, and a double-handful of pure bone dust, not meal, but dust; or any good commercial fertilizer can be used—a double handful of it to each plant, but allowing none of it to come in contact with the stems or leaves.

S. A. COOK.

*Milledgeville, Ga.*

***

### THE SCILLA SIBERICA.

The Scilla Siberica is one of the loveliest of the small flowered bulbs. Its blossoms are of the purest blue, of the most exquisite shade you can imagine. They grow on slender stems and are frail and delicate in appearance.

SCILLA SIBERICA.

Last fall I put a lot of these little bulbs out of doors, and early in the spring they began blooming, the tiny bulbs seemed rather to outdo themselves in sending up flower stalks and the dainty, delicate blossoms were very fair to look upon.

It will pay any flower lover to invest in a few (or a good many) of these bulbs; they cost but a trifle and they make an ideal border for a bulb bed anywhere. They are much finer if set in rows of half a dozen wide or even more. The bulbs may be set closely and should not be covered too deeply. Set them perhaps three inches apart and as many inches under cover. Mulch the bed after setting, or before cold weather comes on too severely. Still they are hardy, perfectly so, but a little protection given even to the hardiest bulb, will make itself shown in the size and quality of the flowers.

The scilla makes a pretty bulb for forcing, as it blooms so early it may easily be had in blossom for the winter holidays. A dozen or more of the little bulbs may be set in a six inch pot. After setting, put away in the dark to root, for some six weeks, then bring to the light and you will soon be rewarded by the shooting up of slender green stalks and the blossom stem almost at the same time. They continue in bloom for quite a length of time, and while they cannot compare with some other bulbs for size, their dainty exquisiteness may, to some, make up for such lack.

ROSE SEELYE-MILLER.

***

### PROGRESSIVE ADVERTISING.

**The Proctor & Collier Co. Open an Office in Chicago.**

The Proctor & Collier Co., Cincinnati, have opened an office in the Marquette Building, Chicago, with Mr. John Lee Mahin as manager. The Proctor & Collier Co. have worked the field of advertising in and about Cincinnati so well during the past twelve years that they are now recognized as one of the six largest advertising agencies in the United States. When the character of the business they do is considered, they are excelled by none. Advertising placed by them has made the Everett Piano, Globe Office Furniture, Hawkes Cut Glass, Mitchell Wood Mantels, Rockwood Pottery and Ivory Soap known everywhere. A score more of customers have reaped success in proportion to the amount of advertising they have done. Most of the advertising of Cincinnati merchants and manufacturers that is not purely local is in charge of The Proctor & Collier Co. In opening an office in Chicago they have widened the field of opportunity. Mr. Mahin was graduated from a newspaper office in Iowa, where he learned the details of the publishing business. For the past two years he has been connected with one of the largest advertising agencies in Chicago, and has placed advertisements of the Sulphume Co., Russell Carpet Co., Vive Camera Co., Gladiator Cycle Co., The Cudahy Pharmaceutical Co., Muscatine Oat Meal Co., Tobey Furniture Co., Mead Cycle Co., St. Louis Corset Co., Duplex Saddle Co., Winslow Bros. Co., Stark Bros. Nurseries and others.—*Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.*

(Notice this to-day. This ad. may not appear again.)

**$100 IN GOLD GIVEN AWAY**

Who can form the greatest number of words from the letters in RELIABILITY? You can make twenty or more words, we feel sure, and if you do you will receive a good reward. Do not use any letter more times than it appears in the word. Use no language except English. Words spelled alike, but with different meaning, can be used but once. Use any dictionary. Pronouns, nouns, verbs, adverbs, prefixes, suffixes, adjectives, proper nouns allowed. Anything that is a legitimate word will be allowed. Work it out in this manner: Rat, let, lye, lie, liable, bit, bite, bet, bat, etc. Use these words in your list. The publishers of WOMAN'S WORLD AND JENNESS MILLER MONTHLY will pay $50.00 in gold to the person able to make the largest list of words from the letters in the word RELIABILITY; $10.00 for the second; $5.00 for the third; $5.00 for the fourth; and $2.00 each for the thirty next largest lists. The above rewards are given free and without consideration for the purpose of attracting attention to our handsome woman's magazine, thirty-six pages, 144 long columns, finely illustrated, and all original matter, long and short stories by the best authors; price, $1.00 per year. To enter the contest, it is necessary for you to send 25 cents in stamps or silver for a three months' trial subscription with your list of words, and every person sending the 25 cents and a list of twenty words or more is guaranteed an extra present, by return mail (in addition to the magazine), of a 188-page book, "Treasure Island," by Robert Louis Stevenson, a fascinating story of love and thrilling adventure. Satisfaction guaranteed in every case or money refunded. Lists should be sent at once, and not later than May 15. The names and addresses of successful contestants will be printed in June issue, published in May. Our publication has been established ten years. We refer you to any mercantile agency for our standing. Make your list now. Address WOMAN'S WORLD PUB. CO., 225-6-7 Temple Court Building. N. Y. City.

## Worthy of More Attention

**Tuberous Begonias.**

Beautiful summer blooming plants. Leaves of beautiful form. Flowers large and of brilliant colors—White, Rose, Red and Yellow.

*Tubers, each, 20 cents; per dozen, $2.00.*

**JAMES VICKS SONS,**
ROCHESTER, N. Y.

## DATURA—SWEET NIGHTINGALE.

ONE of the handsomest window plants for the amateur's collection is the Datura, Sweet Nightingale, and to its beauty is added novelty, for it is a flower rarely seen in the window garden.

It may be raised from seed and brought into bloom in about two months, or a root may be obtained from a florist.

In raising the datura from seed it is essential to keep the soil constantly moist for this plant loves dampness and even when well grown betrays its aversion to drouth by all manner of disappointing freaks.

A root dug out of the flower garden in the fall was planted in a quart tin, and removed to a north window. It soon began to grow luxuriantly, and the foliage being both rich and handsome, it formed a fine background for a very floriferous but shabbily foliaged geranium, the contrast between the double rose pink geranium blossoms and the soft gray green of the datura leaves being pleasing and

DATURA WRIGHTII.

harmonious. The sun in that south window was hot, and the datura roots soon filled the soil and the plant literally loaded itself with little gray-green buds. Although the plant strove valiantly to bring the buds into bloom, it was allowed to dry out entirely over and over again, and the poor little buds came to an untimely death from cruel neglect.

At last, for very shame's sake, the plant was given a good drink of water every night, whether it was dry or not, and richly has it rewarded the extra attention.

In the house the blossoms are much larger and finer than when grown in the garden, becoming almost gigantic, and their exquisite fragrance is almost intoxicating in its sweetness, that from one flower alone perfuming a good-sized room, until one could almost imagine a breath from Eden had been wafted through.

The flower is very like an immense convolvulus, or a lily, and is borne erect on a long stiff stem. In color it is pure, pearly white, faintly flushed on its outer edge.

The only fault to be found with this datura is the evanescent type of its beauty, each blossom remaining perfect only twenty-four hours. Tonight two flowers open wide their superb perfumed chalices, tomorrow about noon they will droop, and before night they will hang limp and lifeless.

A well grown specimen, however, will throw open several of its exquisite blooms every night for weeks at a time, and thus be as constantly in bloom as many more lasting flowers.

MARY FOSTER SNYDER.

***

## THE RATHBUN BLACKBERRY.

This new variety of blackberry with its novel trait of rooting at the tips of the shoots, thus producing plants, does not sucker objectionably like most other kinds; but when roots are broken by cultivation or by taking up plants, they will show their tenacity of life and determination to live and grow.

In case of accident to the bush, or close pruning, or late frosts which kill the first fruit buds, its abundant vital forces will push out lower and later buds which will develop strong shoots and a good yield of fruit. The culture and management of the bushes is about the same as that of other varieties. Give them plenty of room, say five by eight feet and clean culture. Thin the canes to three or four in a hill. Don't mind about pinching off the top. Allow a few of the tips to penetrate the soil, or take care to help them a little if you want a few plants.

After the growth is matured in the fall, or any time before starting to grow in the spring, trim the bushes severely, leaving only three or four canes, and cut these back one-third or one-half their length, leaving a straight, upright cane with little if any of the branch. They will bear abundance of fruit even then, and better and larger berries than if more bush was allowed to remain. The blossoms are very large, pure white and ornamental.

The fruit grows to a great size. It is the largest blackberry I ever saw. I have filled a quart basket with forty berries and found samples measuring 1¾ inches in length by 1⅜ inches in cross diameter. It is ripe when black, but will keep for days, retaining its color and becoming mellow and luscious. It will outsell any other berry in the market.

A. F. RATHBUN.

*Chautauqua County, N. Y.*


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**THE STANDARD PENS OF THE WORLD.**
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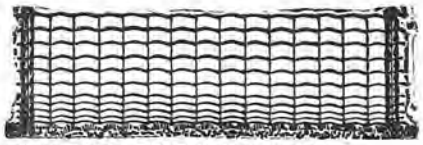
**Highest Awards, Paris Exposition, 1878 and 1889, and Chicago, 1893.**



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**$4.50** FOR A FINE, SMOOTH SURFACE, WOOL LADIES' CLOTH TAILOR MADE SUIT, Black, Navy Blue or Tan, (any style A, B, or C) a good weight, soft, stylish, good wearing goods. JACKETS, beautifully made and finished. SKIRTS, very full sweep, lined with taffeta, velvet binding, silk stitching. The material alone would cost you almost $4.50.

**$5.50** FOR A LADIES' VERY FINE IMPORTED ENGLISH WOOL SERGE TAILOR MADE SUIT, Black, Green or Navy Blue (any style A, B or C). JACKET lined with fancy figured silkine, elegantly trimmed, button ornamented, very stylish and dressy. SKIRT very full sweep, taffeta lining, velvet binding, silk stitching. The material alone would cost you about $5.50.

**OUR OFFER** Cut this ad. out and send to us. SEND NO MONEY, state suit wanted, style and color, give your weight and height, state number inches around body at bust, around body at waist, length of skirt from waist to bottom, and IN FIVE DAYS we will send suit to you by express, C.O.D., subject to examination. You examine it at your express office, and if found as represented and the greatest bargain ever heard of, pay the express agent our price and express charges. Cloth samples and Spring Catalogue of Dresses, Skirts, Waists, Wrappers & Capes and Cloaks free on application. Address, SEARS, ROEBUCK & CO., Cheapest Supply House on Earth, Fulton, Desplaines and Wayman Sts., CHICAGO, ILL. (Sears, Roebuck & Co., are thoroughly reliable.
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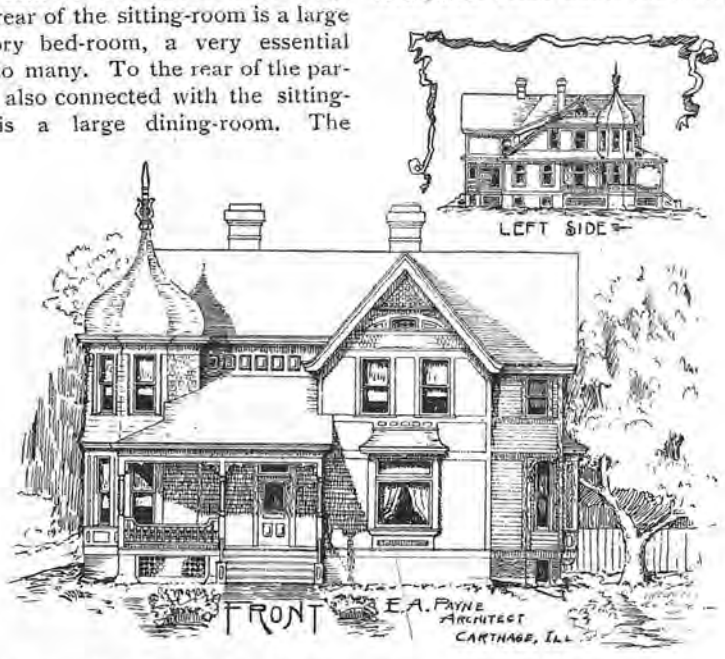
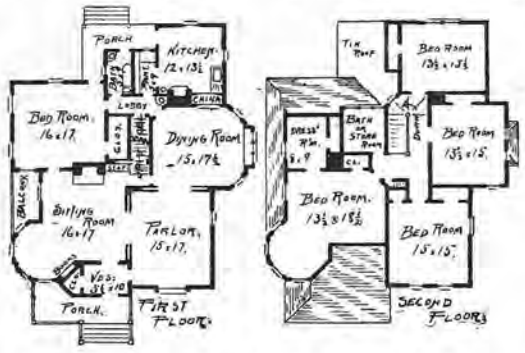
I. S. Johnson & Co., 18 Custom House St., Boston, Mass.

### A NINE ROOM HOUSE.

This building was designed to meet the requirements of a moderate sized family at a reasonable cost, and, as will be seen, the plan in general outline is well broken and arranged with a view to securing this amount of space and accomodations in the most convenient shape. The front entrance is through a vestibule into either the parlor or sitting-room. The sitting-room is a very cozy room, containing a large bay, an open fireplace and mantel, and a pretty built-in book case and secretary. To the rear of the sitting-room is a large first story bed-room, a very essential feature to many. To the rear of the parlor, and also connected with the sitting-room, is a large dining-room. The




passage from the dining-room to the kitchen is through the pantry, and also through the china closet. The arrangement of this part of the house is very convenient. There is a lobby opening between, and giving communication to, the dining-room, bed-room, bath room




and pantry. The pantry is well provided with shelves, bins, pastry table, etc. The kitchen is provided with a sink and brick-in range with range boiler. The china closet, between the dining-room and kitchen, is very conveniently arranged, opening from both sides. There is a base shelf two feet six inches above the floor and on the dining-room side there is provided below the base shelf a locker and case of drawers. There is also a case of drawers under the seat of the projected window in the dining-room. The bath-room is furnished with a porcelain bath tub, water closet and marble wash bowl. There is also a wash bowl in the lobby. The stairs to the second story go up from an alcove off the sitting-room, and land in a hall above, from which are accessible four large bed-rooms, the stairs to the attic and a large store room which may be fitted up for a second story bath-room if desired.

The foundation walls are of stone and brick, with cellar under the whole house. Furnace is placed under the dining-room. The building above the foundation is of wood, with framing timber of dry pine. The side walls are sheathed with shiplap sheathing, then covered with sheathing paper and weather boarded with six inch, clear pine, beveled siding, laid four and one-half inches to the weather. The roofs are covered with best quality cypress shingles. The walls inside are white, hard finished on two coats of lime mortar. The floors are of pine, laid double throughout the first story. All the interior trim of the first story is of cypress wood, and of the second story white pine; all finished natural in hard oil. The building has been erected thus complete for $3,000, and might be done for less in some places.

## A Grand Plant

**Hemerocallis aurantiaca major.**
**Orange-Yellow Day Lily.**

A hardy perennial plant. Bears great numbers of flowers. Flowers seven or eight inches across.

*Strong Roots, 75 cents each; two for $1.25.*

**JAMES VICKS SONS,**
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## SWEET PEAS AND CUT-WORMS.

The Rev. W. T. Hutchins lately read a paper, on the subject of "Sweet Peas," before the Massachusetts Horticultural Society, and from which the following extract is made:

"Plant your seed as early as possible. If the sweet pea gave us no other pleasure, it bids us hail with delight that first premature spring day, after the frost is out of the warmest part of our garden, for that is the foreordained time to plant the seed, unless you continue to set apart Fast Day for this purpose. Plant the seed liberally enough to allow for various losses. I plant in double rows at the rate of one ounce to ten feet. Use more than that if it is cheap mixed seed. After all losses the plants should not stand nearer than three inches apart. Some of the devils that did not go into the swine went into the cut-worm. If I open my mouth to boast that I do not have many of them, I shall surely have my pride humbled soon. I believe in going at him in the fall just as soon as the frost has spoiled things, put on a good dressing of salt, freeze him out by spading up as late as possible. The fall is a grand time for making a piece of ground very unpleasant for cut-worms or their eggs. I find virtue in bran and paris green; a pail of bran with a teaspoonful of the poison stirred in, sweetened a little, and sown on the surface or lightly hoed in, in the spring, is a simple remedy. Diverting the worms by planting something of no value for them to feed on helps. Go out in the morning and kill them before breakfast.

***

## A GOOD LECTURE ON MUSHROOMS.

Mr. Wm. Falconer makes the replies to the following questions asked in a late number of *Gardening:*

It is sometimes said that mushroom raising is a difficult art requiring long experience, and the crop an uncertain one. Is this your view?

Ans.—Any one of intelligence can raise mushrooms, at the same time it is an uncertain job. Beginners often have as good success as old practitioners.

Ques. No. 2.—What are the principal causes of failure, and why, in your opinion, is the industry not oftener followed.

Ans.—Poor materials, poor quarters, neglect. Faint heart. Also lack of application and personal interest. It is a crop that one's soul and hands must enter into; dawdling won't grow mushrooms.

Ques. No. 3.—What was the average wholesale price of mushrooms last season, and do you anticipate much change in the price during the next few years?

Ans.—Don't know. Consult a wholesale commission merchant in the New York market.

Ques. No. 4.—What would be a rough estimate of the cost, per square foot of bed, of the manure and labor, and gathering and marketing the crop?

Ans.—Can't tell, so much depends on the man employed. In order to grow mushrooms successfully one must put his own hands as well as his heart and pocket to the wheel. Manure is always a local question.

Ques. No. 5.—Given intelligent management and some little experience (that of a year or two for instance) what weight of marketable mushrooms per square foot of bed, might be reasonably counted on?

Ans.—Three-fifths of a pound.

Ques. No. 6.—What kind of building is in your opinion the best for a mushroom house, and failing that, what structure would you recommend on the score of economy? Would it be practicable and economical for a beginner to hire a florist's greenhouse in preference to building?

Ans.—A close wooden shed, dark, low, and perfectly dry and free from draught is the cheaper and as good as any. But any building, pit or cellar can be made to answer.

Ques. No. 7.—How much capital would be necessary to start in a small way?

Ans.—That depends upon the person going into the business. If he intends hiring the work done, my advice is to go slow, but if he is to do the work himself $500 should give a fellow a nice start.

Ques. No. 8.—In short, how would you advise a beginner to proceed, desirous of starting in a somewhat tentative manner at first?

Ans.—Get his coat and vest, collar and tie off, then on with his overalls and go right into the manure and dirt with his own hands and stick to it without a growl or a let up, every day for four months, then he'll have a better idea of things than any outsider can give him. Personal application means success.

***

## COAL ASHES AND WOOD ASHES.

In making a comparison of these two substances, Mr. J. J. Willis expresses his opinion very cleverly in the *Gardener's Chronicle*:

The ashes of wood contain a large portion of potash, while coal ashes contain scarcely any. Again, coal ashes contain a large proportion of sulphuric acid, while wood ashes contain but little. There are also other differences in composition and in mechanical texture between wood ashes and coal ashes. With reference to this point, let us ask, 'Why are coal ashes, which are derived from vegetable products not identical with the ashes from wood?' I have turned up much literature upon the question, but cannot find an answer, so I give my opinion for what it is worth. During the decomposition of wood, and other vegetable products which went to make up the coal, which may have occupied many thousands of years, before they were submerged, carbonized, and compressed, the rainfall and other atmospheric agencies separated the potash from the vegetable matter, which would thus become distributed and absorbed by the soil, and so lost to the coal products. Further, the nitrogen of vegetation is in the form of albuminoids; that is, nitrogen in combination with sulphur. In the course of the same decomposition previously referred to, the nitrogen would be given off as ammonia, while the sulphur would remain; this latter substance combining with the oxygen of the air and water, would produce the sulphuric acid of the coal. * * * Coal ashes are useful in altering the mechanical texture of clayey, tenacious soils, but they contain little plant food. They are, however, good absorbents of liquid manure, and when so treated they form valuable fertilizers.

***

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## MUSHROOMS.

In regard to mushroom growing, Mr. W. M. Edwards, in *American Gardening*, offers observation on a few points which are overlooked by most writers on the subject.

Care should be taken to procure fresh horse dung from stables where horses are fed hard grain and hay only; the dung of horses that are pastured, or are given rations of carrots, apples, or potatoes, or from animals that are not healthy and are doctored, is to be avoided. After growing successfully for a number of years, I was baffled with failure after failure, and after much loss of time, trouble, and experiment, I discovered I was using just such manure, and that such will not produce mushrooms. The beds should be located where there are no draughts, where temperature varies but little, and where a mean of 58° can be kept up without drying the beds. Good, fresh, live spawn is absolutely necessary, and should be procurred from reliable houses.

***

PLANTING THE FLOWER GARDEN.—Before the planting season arrives the arrangement of the various plants should be carefully studied and decided upon. The general appearance, and the time and manner of blooming, and the color and size of the flowers should be considered in relation to harmonious grouping.

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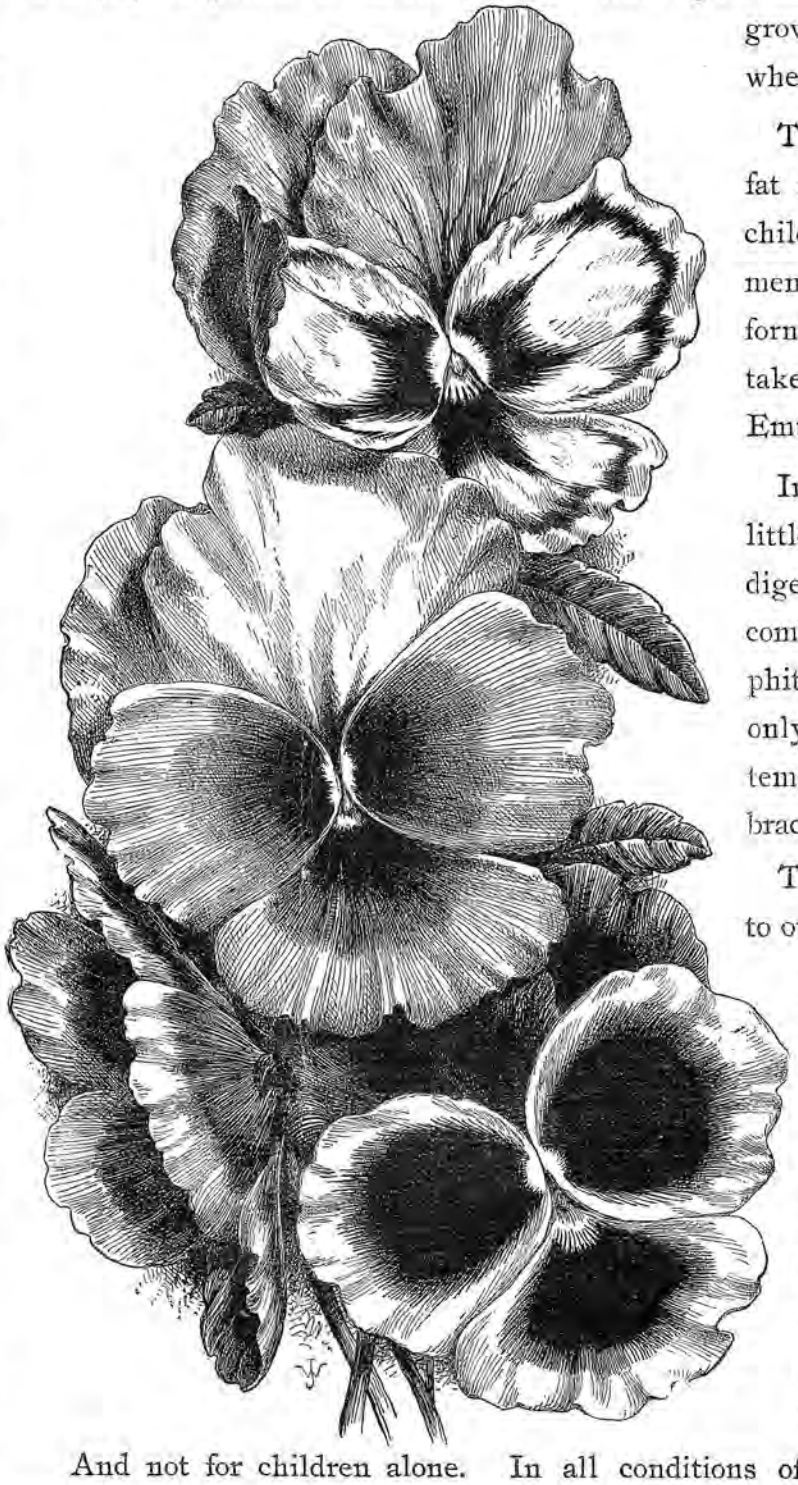

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